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IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

Applicants: Nobumasa SUZUKI et al.

Group Art Unit: 3733

Appln. No: 10/659,297

Examiner: P. PHILOGENE

Filed: September 11, 2003

Confirmation No.: 3563

For: ROD CONNECTOR

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION DISCLOSURE STATEMENT

Commissioner for Patents
U.S. Patent and Trademark Office
Customer Service Window, Mail Stop AMENDMENT
Randolph Building
401 Dulany Street
Alexandria, VA 22314

Sir :

In accordance with the duty of disclosure under 37 C.F.R. §1.56 and §§1.97-1.98 and supplemental to the Information Disclosure Statements previously filed, Applicants hereby bring to the attention of the Examiner a Japanese Notice of Reasons for Refusal that was mailed on August 14, 2007, with respect to patent family member Japanese Patent Application No. 2002-267299, in which the following documents were cited:

- (1) Japanese Patent Publication No. JP 2000-033091 A, together with an English language Abstract; and
- (2) U.S. Patent No. 5,584,831. Applicants note that this document was previously cited in the Information Disclosure Statement that was filed on January 29, 2004 in the present application.

The relevance of these documents, as ascertained with respect to the Japanese claims by the Japanese Examiner, is set forth in the Japanese Notice of Reasons for Refusal.

Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner consider the above material and cite the same. A copy of the above-noted foreign document is attached hereto, and is listed on an attached Form PTO-1449. Copies of the Japanese Notice of Reasons for Refusal and an English language translation thereof are also attached hereto. The Examiner is requested to initial the appropriate spaces on the attached Form, and to return a copy of the completed Form to Applicants with the next official communication in the present application.

Since this Supplemental Information Disclosure Statement is being submitted subsequent to the issuance of a Non-Final Office Action on the merits, but before the issuance of a Final Office Action on the merits, Applicant has provided below a Statement Under 37 C.F.R. § 1.97(e). However, the Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge payment of any necessary additional fees associated with this communication or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 19-0089.

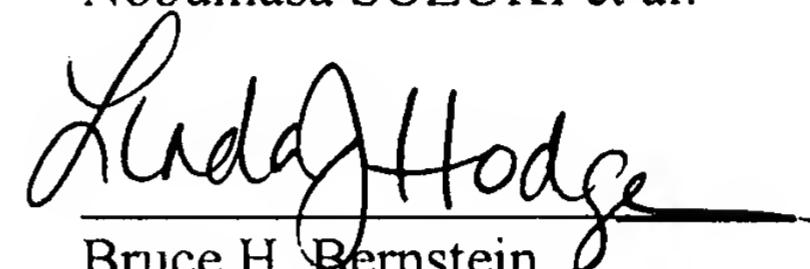
Statement Under 37 C.F.R. 1.97(e)

In accordance with 37 C.F.R. 1.97(e), the undersigned hereby states that each item of information contained in the information disclosure statement was first cited in any communication from a foreign patent office in a counterpart foreign application not more than three months prior to the filing of the information disclosure statement. Of course, this statement does not apply to information that has previously been cited by Applicant or the Examiner in the present application as that information is already of record and no certification is necessary.

Should the Examiner have any questions, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the below-listed telephone number.

Respectfully Submitted,
Nobumasa SUZUKI et al.

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September 7, 2007
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